

It was an exceedingly difficult decision, above all in that it must involve a break of the close texture of their daily life. If one of them went into parliament, the other would, in a sense, be stranded. They were both, by no means, over sixty and sixty is late to make a complete change of habits, occupation, routine. They love their routine, to change it was a hardship in itself a hardship rendered infinitely more severe by the certain cost in separation. That they ever contemplated the sort of formal membership* later almost fashionable, seems unlikely, or that there was ever any doubt as to which of them it was to be who was to be the member. The question was always one of his going in, following, to that extent, in the footsteps of his hero, John Stuart Mill. His work on the County Council, up to 1910, and his work with the Labour party, above all on its National Executive, since 1915, marked him out for the ordeal—for as an ordeal he felt it. He had stood for London University, in 1918, that however was little more than a gallant gesture, there never had been any serious question of his getting in. Yet, so far as it went, it was a significant gesture, and felt, by the partners themselves, to be such. Step by step, they got nearer to Westminster, in their minds, after that. With characteristic magnanimity, she pressed him. He still hesitated. His hesitations were finally routed by pressure from quite another quarter from the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

In the 1920 edition of *The History of Trade Unionism* they note the rise to predominant importance of

the Miners as
the "outstanding feature of the Trade Union
world between
1890 and 1920 " In the first decade of the
nineteenth
century, the Miners threw up a great national
leader in
Robert Smillie under his leadership, the Mineis'
Federation
of Great Britain came into being and made a
series of
tremendous efforts to redress the terrible
hardships of the
life of the miners and of the lives of the women
and children